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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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OK

USSR: [Moscow is preparing further public moves on Berlin and the German question. The aide-memoire which Mikoyan handed to Secretary Dulles on 5 January stated that the USSR, "in the very near future," would present the Western powers with a draft German peace treaty and also propose the convening of a conference within "approximately two months" to conclude a treaty. Mikoyan has pointedly reiterated previous Soviet denials that the Soviet note of 27 November on Berlin represents an ultimatum. Communist diplomats in Western Europe are again hinting at a compromise which would include East Berlin in the free city.]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

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Cyprus: Greek-Turkish negotiations on the Cyprus issue may have reached a deadlock. While notes continue to be exchanged between Athens and Ankara in an attempt to reach agreement, the positions of the two governments have become more inflexible. Meanwhile the anti-EOKA operations recently launched by the British, combined with possible steps toward implementation of the controversial Macmillan Plan for Cyprus, may spark a new outbreak of terrorism on the island. [redacted]

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III. THE WEST

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West Germany: The Bonn Foreign Ministry is arranging an extensive good-will tour of the Far East by West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt next month. The purpose is to gain support for the western position on Berlin in key neutralist countries and to counteract the effect of East German Premier Grotewohl's tour. The Foreign Ministry considers talks with Nehru the most important aspect of the trip.

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LATE ITEM

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NO
*Laos: Prime Minister Phoui Sananikone's party voted 26-2 in an 8 January caucus to support his plan to call the National Assembly into special session on 12 January. Phoui has thus cleared a major hurdle in his drive to assume full powers and form a new government. The outcome remains in doubt, however, because of Phoui's narrow assembly majority and the lack of party discipline. If Phoui fails in the assembly test, there would be strong pressure for an outright seizure of power by the military.

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USSR Preparing Further Moves on Berlin and the German Question

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[The Soviet leaders are preparing further public initiatives on both Berlin and the German question designed to force the West to agree to high-level talks. There are growing indications that one of Moscow's main purposes in precipitating a Berlin crisis was to increase pressure on the Western powers to enter negotiations on the wider German question under conditions favorable to the USSR.]

[The aide-memoire which Mikoyan handed to Secretary Dulles on 5 January stated that the USSR, "in the very near future," would present the Western governments with a draft German peace treaty and propose convening a conference within "approximately two months." Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov in Paris said, when he called on President de Gaulle on 7 January to present a copy of the aide-memoire, that the USSR would soon propose a conference to discuss both Germany and Berlin.]

[The Soviet leaders probably believe such a proposal will go far toward appearing to meet the Western position that Berlin can be discussed only in the wider framework of the German problem and European security.]

[The USSR may soon put forward further modifications of its Berlin proposals. The aide-memoire repeated the substance of the original Soviet note but added a proposal for the creation of a "permanent international commission" to implement the free-city status of West Berlin. Communist diplomats in Western Europe are again circulating hints regarding a compromise solution which would include East Berlin in the free city. According to press reports, a Soviet source in Berlin has stated that Mikoyan will propose a compromise when he meets with President Eisenhower.]

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In his talks with American leaders, Mikoyan has been trying to give the impression of flexibility on the Berlin question. At a private dinner on 5 January, he denied that the USSR would advance the six-month deadline for agreement on a free-city status for West Berlin and took the position that the Western notes of 31 December did not represent a rejection of the Soviet proposals. He said, "We were delighted to see that you proposed negotiating the propositions."

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Cyprus Situation

[Negotiations between Greece and Turkey to resolve their dispute over Cyprus, under way since mid-December, appear to have reached an impasse over such issues as the Turkish-proposed establishment of Greek and Turkish military bases on the island and the ethnic composition of the future Cypriot armed forces. A stiffening of attitudes on both sides has recently been noted.]

[Some agreement on a settlement based on guaranteed independence for Cyprus apparently had been reached earlier, and there continues to be evidence of a genuine desire for a rapprochement in both Greece and Turkey. If present differences can be resolved, the Greek and Turkish prime ministers are expected to meet--probably in a third country. Failure to reach some agreement will cause adverse public reaction in both countries.]

[On Cyprus, the British forces have launched a new security drive against EOKA which may lead to renewed Greek Cypriot violence. EOKA leader Grivas, in proclaiming a truce on 24 December, stated that EOKA operations would not be renewed provided the British reciprocated. In the implementation of the Macmillan Plan for Cyprus, meanwhile, the British appear to be caught between a desire not to jeopardize possible success of present Greek-Turkish negotiations and a fear that postponement of implementation will be regarded by the Turks as vacillation. Action to implement the plan at this time would be regarded with deep hostility in Greece and among Greek Cypriots.]

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III. THE WEST

Bonn Foreign Ministry Arranging Far East Tour For West Berlin Mayor

West German Foreign Minister Brentano has persuaded West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt to follow up his visit to the United States in February with an extensive good-will tour of the Far East in an effort to gain support in key neutralist countries for the Western position on Berlin. The Foreign Ministry also sees the trip as an effective means of counteracting the visit of East German Premier Grotewohl to India, Burma, and other countries.

Foreign Ministry officials feel that the most important aspect of Brandt's visit will be personal talks with Nehru, in which he can attempt to neutralize any effect Grotewohl may have had. The Foreign Ministry arranged the Far Eastern trip in the belief that a visit from a prominent figure in West Germany's main opposition party would have a beneficial effect. Federal press chief von Eckardt may also visit some Far Eastern countries.

Bonn has been concerned over the warm reception given to Grotewohl by Nasir and reports that an agreement was reached with Cairo to exchange consulates. Although the West German ambassador received assurances from Egyptian officials that no firm agreement had yet been reached on this subject, the West German press has already launched a campaign calling for abandonment of Bonn's policy of breaking relations with any state recognizing East Germany. Visits by Brandt to Arab states are not planned at present.

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